

From: CSAZ
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/24/02 7:04pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

To Whom It May Concern,

I know you are probably receiving a large volume of mail about this and don't have time to read everything.

The short version of my comment is: Leave Microsoft alone and drop all this silly nonsense.

The longer version of my comment is as follows:

I do not, nor have I ever worked for Microsoft. I have no stock or any other financial interest in the company. I am, however, a computer user of many years as well as a self-employed consultant and programmer.

I remember well the late 70's and early 80's when there was no dominant operating system other than CP/M, and that required a different version for every computer as well as programs tweaked specifically for that version of CP/M

It is amazing to me that anyone can look at the progress in computers and software and the dramatic decrease in costs to the consumer for both hardware and software, and then turn around and say that Microsoft has hurt the consumer! Word Perfect used to cost hundreds of dollars just for the Word Processor. They chose to ignore the Windows operating system, and they lost their market share as a result. Today, you can buy Microsoft Office with Word Processor, Spreadsheet, Presentation tool, Database, Personal Information Manager, Web Site designer, etc. for less than what Word Perfect used to charge just for their Word Processor. Where has the consumer been damaged in all this?

Netscape used to dominate the browser market and basically gave away their browser. When they owned 95% of the market, nobody in the Justice department was crying foul and investigating them for having a monopoly in the Web Browser market.

Apple computer consistently quashes any attempt by anyone to build systems that are compatible with Apple which results in higher prices for their systems than PC's, yet nobody is investigating them for squelching competition.

Sun has been just as draconian with their software and operating systems as Microsoft has, but since they are smaller, they get away with it. They have not helped to lower the cost of software or hardware in any way. They came out with Star Office to replace Microsoft Office, but it hasn't affected

prices any as the prices are already very fair for the benefit one gets from them.

If Microsoft has indeed done things illegally, they should be punished for it. However, I think that much of this case is about people missing the boat and who would do and have done the same things they are complaining that Microsoft has done.

Not only has there been no proof that Microsoft's market share has caused anything but benefits to the consumer, nothing has ever been proposed to compensate anyone who has allegedly been damaged by their actions. Taking money from Microsoft and giving it to states to do whatever they want with it hardly compensates consumers for any damages they may have had caused to them by Microsoft.

As a programmer, I am glad I can depend on Internet Explorer being installed on my client's machines. It enables me to add online connectivity easily. If I can't depend on it being there, I either have to write multiple versions of my software for each type of browser that may be installed, or my customer is going to have to install Internet Explorer anyway. I would most likely go to the second option, but it still creates another, and unnecessary, layer of installation issues for my clients.

Sincerely,
Matthew Brock

=Sent: 01/24/2002=====

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